THE WEEKLY MAGAZINE

JAZZ INFORMATION

VOL. 1, NO. 6 OCTOBER 17, 1939 TEN CENTS

OBERSTEIN BEGINS SHIPMENT OF UNITED STATES RECORDS

Royale And Varsity Discs to Be On Sale This Week

United States Records, new big-time disc organization headed by Eli Oberstein, former Victor executive, announced its first release last week.

Shipment of records bearing the new Royale and Varsity labels was to have begun on October 12th. New York dealers, however, were still awaiting their arrival on Monday, as Jazz Information went to press. The new discs should be available when this issue appears.

The first U.S. release included, besides a number of sweet and popular titles, several records of interest to the swing fan. On the 75-cent Royale list, there are a pair of sides repressed from Ultraphone masters. These are Freddy Taylor's Blue Drag and Alix Combelle's Crazy Rhythm. Both were recorded in Paris in 1935.

On Varsity, the new company's 35-cent label, Jess Stacy and Stuff Smith were represented; Stacy by Melancholy Mood — What's New, and Smith by Sam, The Vegetable Man — When Paw Was Courtin' Ma.

A number of records previously announced, all repressings, are to be released at the same time. Most interesting to the hot fan will be six Fletcher Henderson sides originally made for Crown.

ONYX CLUB REOPENING POSTPONED; MUNDY STILL REHEARSING BAND

The reopening of the Onyx Club, on 52nd Street in New York, which had been scheduled for Tuesday after several postponements, has been put off again. At press time, Jazz Information could not learn definitely when the famous swing spot would open its doors.

Jim Mundy's band continues rehearsing for its first public appearance, which will take place in the Onyx. At last reports the band included Bobby Moore, Leroy Hill, and Frank Galdraith, trumpets; Norman Green, John McConnell and Edward Johnson, trombones; Ted Barnett, James Hamilton, Al Gibson and Skippy Williams, saxes; Jack Jarvis, bass; Rossiere Wilson, drums; Connie Wainwright, guitar; and Bill Doggett, piano.

Mundy will play tenor, besides arranging for the band. Madeline Green is featured vocalist.

OUR OWN JELLY-ROLL DEPARTMENT

Tempo: didn't Pine Top really spit blood, after all? Or what exactly do you mean by talking about the Lewis-Ammons-Smith Boogie Woogie Trio?

Jazz Information: why did you correct Downbeat's false report, that Jimmy Young had replaced Bennie Morton in Count Basie's band, and then say that Young would replace Morton later, anyhow? Lunceford office denies the whole tale.

Jazzmen: in the Louis Armstrong record of King Of The Zulus, Clarence Babcock said: "I play you one of me native jazz tunes," and not: "I play juanami-'niaca jazz, too."

Downbeat: why does your story on Stacy's recording work say that he just recorded Ec-Stacy, when it was actually months ago? Why doesn't it mention the three other solo sides waxed for Commodore? Why does it report Stacy's Varsity session as "last week," when it actually took place about three weeks before your publication date? Why do you give an incorrect personnel?

United States Records: why don't you learn to spell? The man's name is Alix Combelle, not Conibelle!

Downbeat: we hope that members of your staff who were "stricken" while listening to one of Pine Top Smith's records are now convalescing safely.

LAST MINUTE NEWS

Zeke Zarchy has left the Crosby band. His place as first trumpeter is now filled by Max Herman.

Teddy Wilson and Andy Kirk take their orchestras into the Golden State Ballroom in Harlem this week.

Bunk Johnson is working now, and has less time to practice trumpet. But in his last letter to a friend in New York, he writes that he is playing better and better. Now Bunk wants a copy of the Scott Joplin Jazz Classics Folio, published by Melrose in Chicago. If anyone knows how this book could be obtained, and will communicate with the editors of Jazz Information, he may increase the slight chance that some day we'll hear Bunk play.

JOE MARSALA, BILLIE HOLIDAY JOIN SULLIVAN AT CAFE SOCIETY

Two Bands Will Alternate; Singer To Be With Sullivan

Billie Holiday and Joe Marsala's band have been signed to appear at Cafe Society in Greenwich Village, New York, with Joe Sullivan and his band, starting tonight (Tuesday).

Marsala returns from Washington to play the Village spot. His band will alternate with Sullivan's and Billie Holiday, just back from Chicago, will be featured as vocalist with the Sullivan group.

On off nights (Mondays and Tuesdays) Clarence Profit, without his trio, will be relief pianist while one of the bands is absent.

At rehearsals this week-end the personnel of Sullivan's band was: Sullivan, piano; Murphy Steinberg, trumpet; Glen Long, trombone; Pip Vellani, clarinet; Charlie Berg, tenor; Jules Cassard, bass; Johnny Craig, drums.

The full personnel of Marsala's band could not be learned at press time. It will definitely include Marty Marsala, trumpet; Don Carter, drums, besides Joe's own clarinet.

The Boogie Woogie Trio (Albert Ammons, Pete Johnson and Meade Lux Lewis) is scheduled to return to Cafe Society the first week in November, to be featured again with Frankie Newton's band and Ida Cox, blues singer.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG TAKES BAND TO THE COTTON CLUB

Louis Armstrong opened this Sunday at the Cotton Club, New York, for his first regular night club engagement in several years, headlining a bill which includes Bill Robinson, Avis Andrews and Kaloah.

Contrary to published reports, Armstrong is not fronting Don Redman's orchestra, but still leads his own band, the old Luis Russell outfit. Although several changes have been made in the line-up, the band is substantially the same.

The full personnel is: Shelton "Scad" Hemphill, Henry "Red" Allen, Bernard Flood, trumpets; Wilbur De Paris, J. C. Higginbotham, George Washington, trombones; Rupert Cole, Charlie Holmes, Bingie Madison, Joe Garland, saxes; Lee Blair, guitar; Luis Russell, piano; Pop Foster, bass; Sidney Catlett, drums. Midge Williams is featured vocalist.

JAZZ INFORMATION

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COLLECTORS' ITEMS

Boston collectors will be interested to know that a Hot Jazz Club is being organized in that city. A studio has already been rented, Charles Miller writes us; informal record concerts and jam sessions are planned for the near future. Membership includes many of Beantown's better-known collectors and critics, including Ted Locke and George Frazier. If enough interest is aroused, a small magazine will be published, with circulation limited to members.

Officers of the club are Grover Sales, president; Fred Cox, vice-president; John Warren Travers, secretary-treasurer. For information, write Grover Sales, 317 Allston Street, Allston, Mass.

When Earl Hines was recording for Victor, some ten years ago, he made a piano solo of Glad Rag Doll which was never issued. This is to appear soon on Bluebird, backed by a new solo, Rosetta, recorded recently in Chicago. Another item of interest among Bluebird's releases will be the reissue, on the race list, of Cecil Scott's Lawd, Lawd—In A Corner, featuring Bill Coleman, Frank Newton, Dickie Wells, and Don Frye.

Herman Rosenberg tells us that the banjo player in the Jones and Collins Astoria Hot Eight has been identified as Rene J. Hall, of New York City, who now plays guitar in Ernie Fields' band.

In answer to our question about Hunter's Serenaders, who accompanied Victoria Spivey on Sensational Mood -- Dreaming 'Bout My Man (Vocalion 1621), George Beall writes that this was a well-known Omaha band of the late twenties, personnel details of which have not been obtained. Both titles are credited to Woods and Floyd, if that's much of a clue.

According to Jimmy Noone, Beall adds, Ollie Powers' Play That Thing (Paramount 12059 and Puritan 1502) featured Tommy Ladnier, cornet; Eddie Venson, trombone; Noone, clarinet; Grover Compton, piano; and Powers, drums.

From the same source comes confirmation of our report that it is Ike Rodgers who plays the trombone accompaniments for Alice Moore and Edith Johnson on Paramount. And to the list of Henry Brown - Ike Rodgers duets given by Delaunay, B.E. Riddle adds It Hurts So Good (1396) and Screening The Blues (1397), on Paramount 12816.

To the Jenkins-Addison dope in J.I. No. 2, Riddle adds a side under Addison's name which we missed —Lovely Liza Lee, Bluebird B6144. He also mentions an Ellington, under the name of The Lumberjacks: Spanish Dream (3409), Cameo 8356. Discography lists a Black Beauty (3411), Cameo 8352, under the same name. Has anyone the third master, 3410?

Howard Penny of Portland, Ore.: the Dixie Rhythm Kings' record of The Chant features Shirley Clay on trumpet, Omer Simeon on clarinet, Cecil Irwin on tenor sax, and Earl Hines at the piano. This is Brunswick 7115; the coupling is Congo Love Song.

The players in Richard M. Jones' Kin To Kant Blues — Mush Mouth Blues (Okeh 8349) have been identified as Shirley Clay, trumpet; Preston Jackson, trombone; Stompy Evans, clarinet and alto; Jones, piano; unknown banjo. If this personnel is correct, it holds good for other records too, since these sides have non-consecutive master numbers. Kin To Kant is 9721, Mush Mouth is 9772. Can someone clarify this by giving the master numbers of Okeh 8260, Spanish Shawl — 29th & Dearborn, and Okeh 8290, Wonderful Dream — New Orleans Shags?

Lowell W. Williams writes, from York, Pennsylvania: "Please publish a note in your 'collectors' items' column concerning the Victor disc 21348, Sippi — Willow Tree by the Louisiana Sugar Babes' orchestra. The trumpet is definitely JOE SMITH and not Jabbo Smith as some believe. Fats Waller himself informed me of this, and the style in itself is distinctive enough to make the fact quite evident. Joe had a mournful tone and his playing was extremely subtle, and not at all showy. Jelly Roll has told me, and also Fats, that upon occasions Joe's music would cause those around him to weep, especially while working in theater pit bands. This is all borne out by listening to the above-mentioned record."

However, we have spoken to collectors who had asked Jabbo Smith about these records. Jabbo says he played on them, and not Joe Smith. Furthermore, evidence that Jabbo's style is not always showy is found in his marvelously subtle work in Ellington's Black And Tan Fantasy—the Okeh version. Our copy of this Louisiana Sugar Babes disc is lost under a pile of old Wallers, right now, so we can't listen to it. But as far as Jazz Information is concerned, there is no certainty that it's Joe Smith playing that horn—no, Mr. Williams. But thanks anyhow, and we'll see if we can't get some proof, one way or the other.

Two weeks ago we mentioned the Louisiana Rhythmakers' (Ellington) Rocking In Rhythm — Twelfth Street Rag, Melotone 12445, but neglected to say that it's a reissue of the well-known Brunswick coupling. The Jewel issue of the Whoopee Makers' It's So Good — Lovable And Sweet, mentioned last week, was under the name of the Dixie Jazz Band.

Who has information on the following?

The Midnight Airdales, Columbia 1981-D, Swanee Shuffle (149002) — I Gotta Have You (149003).

Rosa Henderson, Vocalion 1038, Rough House Blues — She Belongs To Me. Who plays the cornet?

Kansas City Frank's Footwarmers, Paramount 12898, Wailing Blues.

The Levee Syncopators, Van Dyke 909, The Rackett (3843).

Chicago Stompers, Decca 7424, Wild Man Stomp — Stomp Your Stuff. (Reissued from Champion.)

Wabash Trio, Radiex 7039, Coal Black Blues (3384) — Lone Western Blues (3383).

Louisiana Rhythmakers, Perfect 15738, St. Louis Blues — Casa Loma Stomp. (Proof required.)

Five Hot Chocolates, Van Dyke 71786, Memphis Stomp (3607).

Five Hot Chocolates, Radiex 952, Baby Knows How (3608).

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RECORDS

JELLY ROLL MORTON'S New Orleans Jazzmen (BB 10434) High Society — I Thought I Heard Buddy Bolden Say. Sydney De Paris, trumpet; Claude Jones, trombone; Albert Nicholas, clarinet; Sidney Bechet, soprano sax; Happy Cauldwell, tenor sax; Jelly Roll Morton, piano; Lawrence Lucie, guitar; Wellman Braud, bass; Zutty Singleton, drums.

On the whole, this is a better coupling than the first Jelly Roll record, issued last week. The same general remarks apply to tnese two as to Didn't He Ramble and Winin' Boy Blues, but the second coupling is more uniformly successful. High Society is the familiar march, arranged in parade style. The only solos are by Bechet and Nicholas, who follow each other playing the traditional clarinet chorus on the tune. Sydney DeParis gives the ensembles great drive, and Nicholas' clarinet plays in beautifully, especially in the last chorus. Zutty and Braud keep the rhythm well in hand, Jelly Roll coming in strong at the end.

The other side is a much less familiar tune, now recorded for the first time——a lovely melody, reminiscent of many old blues. Played in slow tempo, it features one of Sidney Bechet's breath-taking soprano solos, combining the utmost simplicity with the lyric quality of genius. Jelly Roll's vocal is sentimental, even a little comic. In this tempo, we can hear what a steady, strong foundation Lawrence Lucie provides.

COUNT BASIE Kansas City Seven (Vo 5118) Dickie's Dream--Lester Leaps In. Buck Clayton, trumpet; Dickie Wells, trombone; Lester Young, tenor sax; Count Basie, piano; Freddie Green, guitar; Walter Page, bass; Joe Jones, drums.

These two sides by a small group from Count Basie's orchestra aren't very different from the usual output of the full band. The absence of five brass and three reeds only makes it necessary to express the Basie patterns in terms of the solo instruments. The ensemble passages here, because of the reduced instrumentation, bear a noticeable resemblance to some of Ellington's simpler scores for his small bands. The music is neither as free as it was in the Jones-Smith discs, nor as subtle as the Kansas City Six records. There are more solos, and longer ones, than in an ordinary Basie waxing — that's all.

Lester Leaps In is mostly a display of Young's fluid tenor style. The only other soloist on the side is Basie himself, playing his most percussive piano. In Dickie's Dream the first solo is by Buck Clayton, playing the sharp, effortless muted trumpet style in which his best work has been done. Young's chorus on this side, high spot of the record, is followed by a trombone solo too staccato and tricky to be good.

BENNY CARTER'S Orchestra (Vo 5112) Scandal In A Flat--Savoy Stampede. Two more originals by Benny Carter and his new orchestra. Scandal is slow, much arranged, and slightly Ellingtonian. Stampede, fast and brassy, has more solo spots. Featured men are Carter, alto; Ernie Powell, tenor; Tyree Glenn, vibes; Eddie Hayward, piano; Joe Thomas, trumpet; and Hayes Alvis, bass. As jazz, these sides are not very interesting. They invite comparison to Ellington's work, but come nowhere near its value. Benny's best arranging, for our money, is found in such simple, effective works as Dee Blues.

WILL BRADLEY'S Orchestra (Vo 5130) Memphis Blues -- Old Doc Yak. Like the first record by any new band, this Bradley-McKinley debut is not too auspicious. These sides, waxed before the band's present personnel was set, show a rather brassy, heavy outfit, well based on McKinley's drumming. Bradley (formerly Wilbur Schwichtenburger) throws in a fair Dixie trombone chorus, Steve Lipkins plays good trumpet, and Freddy Slack takes a fine, rather inappropriate piano chorus. Coupling is novelty, featuring McKinley on drums and vocal.

DUKE ELLINGTON'S Orchestra (Co 35-240) Bouncing Buoyancy -- A Lonely Co-ed. Not good enough for Ellington. The first side lives down to its title, with Cootie Williams, Johnny Hodges, Lawrence Brown, and Harry Carney featured soloists between stompy arranged passages. The better side is sweet, with Cootie playing his best melancholy growl trumpet, a Brown solo, and Ivy Anderson's nostalgic vocal.

FATS WALLER and his Rhythm (BB 10-437) Bond Street —— What A Pretty Miss. Interesting because there's no Waller vocal on the first side, which is mainly solo piano. It's a quiet, pretty tune, played in slow tempo with Fats' easy rock and superb control. Not outstanding, however. The coupling is the ordinary Waller jive.

TEDDY WILSON and his Orchestra (Co 35232) Jumpin' On The Blacks And Whites —— The Little Things That Mean So Much. An original, in fast tempo, Jumpin' lets five soloists in succession take short spots to say nothing at all. Ben Webster's tenor comes the closest.

BILLIE HOLIDAY and her Orchestra (Vo 5129) Our Love Is Different — Swing! Brother, Swing! Holiday vocals in her accustomed style. The first side is sweet, with the band (Frankie Newton's, mostly) playing a heavy arrangement behind Billie.

(Continued on Page 4)

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RECORDS

(Continued from Page 3)

The reverse is one of Billie's well known favorites, which we've heard her sing better than this.

CAB CALLOWAY'S Orchestra (Vo 5126) Twee-Twee-Tweet—For The Last Time I Cried Over You. We mention this trash because there's always something interesting going on in Cab's band. This time it's Dizzy Gillespie, young trumpet player who took Mouse Randolph's chair, when Mouse joined Benny Carter recently. Dizzy plays a few bars on the first side — nothing much; but they tell us to look out for him.

GLENN MILLER'S Orchestra (Vo 5131) Dipper Mouth Blues—Doin' The Jive. Two old sides reissued from Brunswick to meet the competition. Dippermouth has been played better.

ALBERTA HUNTER (De 7644) Chirpin' The Blues — I'll See You Go. Accompanied by Charlie Shavers, trumpet; Buster Bailey, clarinet; Lil Armstrong, piano; Wellman Braud, bass. Chirpin' The Blues is really good, the singing and the accompaniment clean and hot. Charlie Shavers has played some astonishingly fine trumpet on recent race discs, and his muted playing here is fine. Bailey's clarinet, a little oversophisticated, fits well into the rather refined atmosphere of this record. The other side is not blues but a peculiar monologue, not very good.

THE HONEY DRIPPER, Roosevelt Sykes (De 7642) Under Eyed Woman — Get Your Row Out. Roosevelt Sykes is a good blues singer, and his unusual ability as a blues pianist is well known. These two self-accompanied vocals are good examples of Sykes' style.

SONNY JONES (Vo 05124) I'm Pretty Good At It — Won't Somebody Pacify My Mind. Jones sings the blues, and accompanies himself on guitar. The first side also has harmonica, played by Sonny Terry of Carnegie Hall, and washboard.

JAZZ GILLUM and his Jazz Boys (BB 8257) Somebody Been Talking To You —One Time Blues. Real blues singing, with accompaniment by an alto sax, harmonica, guitar, and an exciting blues pianist.

JOHNNIE TEMPLE (De 7642) Good Suzie — Down In Mississippi. Another good blues singer, accompanied by a nice clarinet (maybe Odell Rand) and piano, guitar and bass. Suzie is much the better side.

CHARLIE BURSE and his Memphis Mudcats (Vo 05128) Magic Spell Blues—Ain't Gonna Be No Doggone Afterwhile. A blues coupling, recorded (badly) in Memphis, with alto sax, piano, guitars, bass and traps accompaniment. Not very good.

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ANDY KIRK (De 2774)
Why Don't I Get Wise To Myself
Say It Again

ELLA FITZGERALD (De 2769)
Please Tell Me The Truth
Billy

THE BANDWAGON

Benny Carter's orchestra and the Savoy Sultans are playing at the Savoy Ballroom. On Sunday, the off night, the management continues to book name bands for one-nighters—Bunny Berigan last week. Next Sunday it's Earl Hines, following his week at the 125th Street Apollo.

Edgar Hayes follows Hines at the Apollo, beginning Friday. Hines is heading for Chicago, where he will open at the Grand Terrace for several months.

Anna Robinson, who recorded with Jimmy Johnson on Vocalion recently, sang a few numbers at Kelly's Stable Friday night, sounding considerably better than she did on the record. Ida James, formerly singer for Earl Hines and John Kirby, now with Hot Lips Page.

Wes Westerfield's trio, now at the Pirate's Den, has Wes on tenor, Earl Murphy, bass, and Gene Schrader, piano. The trio alternates with Stella Brooks and Art Hodes, continuing their engagement at the Third Street spot.

Lennie Ware's band is still at George's Tavern..heard Lennie play with Teddy Bunn, at an uptown spot last week, and he showed up right well.

Nick's Tavern might be a good place to hit this week, with Muggsy Spanier in town. Joey Bushkin was down there Friday.